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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

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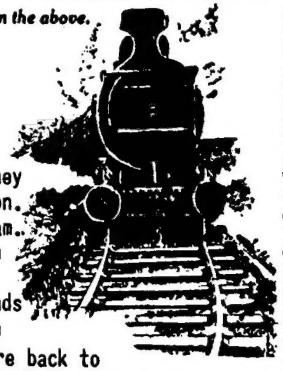

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News in this issue is updated thru May 30, 1981.

ON THE COVER

In this issue Joel Kamisher completes his recounting of the excursion train trip in which the ex-Southern Pacific steam engine 4449 was brought from Portland OR to Sacramento CA for the opening of the California State Railroad Museum. On Apr 26, the second day of the two-day trip, a photo runby was made at a siding called Andisite, and that event is pictured here in this full-color photo by Gene Hines. Compare the Daylight colors of the engine with its former Freedom Train paint, shown on the cover of our last issue.

★ HOUSE COMMITTEE VOTES AMTRAK $725 MILLION

The House Commerce Committee on May 17 voted in favor of a measure pushed by Congressman James Florio of NJ to authorize Amtrak $725 million for the coming fiscal year. This figure compares to the $853 million asked for by Amtrak and the $613 Administration figure already approved by the Senate Commerce Committee. The House bill directs Amtrak to discontinue the PIONEER, INTER-AMERICAN, CARDINAL and SHENANDOAH as of next Oct 1. Amtrak President Alan Boyd told the National Press Club on May 28 that the House's figure is "sufficient" to run the national system "with some belt-tightening." He said about 85% of the system could be kept at that funding level, but refused to say which routes might be dropped: "We've not made a route by route analysis at this stage." However, he noted that the CARDINAL and SHENANDOAH must be eliminated unless the law is changed, because they do not meet ridership criteria established by Congress in 1979. Boyd also said that Amtrak will seek other sources of revenue to enable it to be free of Federal subsidy in the future. First, by 1985 trains must pay their own costs in order to stay in the system, eliminating operating subsidies. Second, Amtrak will diversify its revenue base to eliminate the need for federal capital funding, by developing its real estate holding in the Northeast (2000 acres of land adjoining the NEC right of way, and 91 stations). At Beech Grove it plans to establish the first comprehensive railroad training center in the U.S., that can be used by other railroads.

The Senate bill is expected to reach the Senate floor in mid-June, and the House bill by mid-July. NARP said that a Senate caucus is being formed to educate Senators on the need for rail support. The House bill exempts Amtrak from state full-crew laws.

★ MASSIVE FIRING AT AMTRAK HEADQUARTERS

On May 29 Amtrak fired about 300 persons at its Washington headquarters in an economy move to placate the Reagan Administration. This was part of a move to cut staff by 25% from the level of Oct 1, 1980. Future cuts will be mostly by attrition. Among the effects of the cuts was the discontinuance of Amtrak News and other employee communication functions.

Rogers E. M. Whitaker, famed rail writer for the New Yorker under the pen name of E. M. Frimbo, died May 11 at Calvary Hospital in The Bronx, NY after a bout with cancer. Whitaker, age 82, had been with the New Yorker 55 years, and had registered a total of 2.74 million miles of rail travel. His last rail account to be published in the New Yorker appeared in the Mar 2 issue--the story of the Fort Leonard Wood Special.

RAIL CANADA

GREYHOUND LINES OF CANADA ended its strike when employees voted May 2 for a new 2½-year contract. Operations resumed May 4, and the company advertised a half-off regular fare promotion between May 8 & 14. The strike had begun Apr 21.

GREATER WINNIPEG WATER DISTRICT has special runs to Indian Bay (Waugh) on all Sundays in Jun, Jul & Aug. Cost is $4 Canadian for 194 miles (the biggest transportation bargain in North America?). Timetable and brochure are free from: GWWD Railway Station, 598 Plinquet St, St. Boniface, Man., Canada R2J 2W7.

NEWFOUNDLAND NARROW GAUGE mixed trains will have better schedules this summer. On Mon, Wed & Fri it's possible to ride from St. John's to Argentia in one day. Bishop Falls-Corner Brook schedule changes from a night return operation to mostly daylight this summer, and Brigus Junction-Carbonear will leave at a better hour. Schedules are in the current VIA Rail system timetable.

END OF PASSENGER TRAINS is "in sight," said VIA Rail Chairman and President Frank Roberts on May 21 to the Standing Committee on Transport, unless VIA can negotiate "fixed price" contracts with CN and CP Rail. Roberts said that despite VIA's attempts to reduce costs, it is being crippled by additional bills from CN and CP which nullify these efforts. VIA pays the railways on a set scale approved by the CTC, but the scale is subject to retroactive revision, meaning that VIA receives additional and unexpected invoices which the company has no means of anticipating. In 1980 CN billed VIA for $13.5 million beyond the $276.6 million already paid the railway, and for CP it was $3.1 million beyond the $63.1 already paid. VIA said it has "no means of verifying the railway bills", altho cost information is available to the Minister, the CTC, CN and CP. VIA estimates that the railways in 1981 are "benefitting by more than $100 million as a result of the Passenger Program."

CANADIANS RIDE TRAINS much more per capita than Americans do. In fact, Canada with an average of 572 rail miles per person in 1980, ranks just behind France in personal rail miles (Americans rode only 45 miles per person last year). Thus VIA Rail carried about 6.5 million passengers last year, compared to 8.1 million for Amtrak in the U.S., which has about ten times the population. These were among some facts presented to the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation on May 4 by Transport 2000 Canada Past President Harry Gow and by John De Lora of the Michigan ARP. The Congressmen were reportedly interested in these facts and let the meeting extend to double its appointed duration.

VIA'S CURRENT TIMETABLE will be replaced sometime in June, we are told, as extra runs will be added between Montreal and Toronto and between Mont. and Quebec.

PUBLIC TRANSIT SUPPORTERS are worried since the Apr 13 elections in Quebec. Altho the Parti Quebecois, with its record of pro-transit government, was re-elected, things may not go well for public transit in the future. Denis de Belleval, the minister of transport under the Levesque government up to Apr 13, has been replaced by Michel Clair of Drummond riding, a rural seat where highways count. The party lost some West Quebec ridings partly over the issue of lack of superhighway construction.

VIA'S LRC TRAIN, composed of engine 6903 and cars 3301, 3302, 3303, 3304 and 3305, was beginning test runs between St. Lambert and Richmond, Que., on Apr 22, using sand bags in place of seats and passengers in the cars. The tests are similar to those made with the Amtrak LRC on the same route last year.

FIRST-CLASS RIDERSHIP on the Montreal-Toronto route rose 25% since last October when VIA introduced its upgraded first class service (called VIA-1). VIA was so encouraged by this that the service was expanded to Montreal-Quebec, Montreal-Ottawa, Ottawa-Toronto and Toronto-Windsor in March.

ONTARIO TASK FORCE on Provincial Rail Policy published its final report on Apr 28. Chairperson Margaret Scrivener said that there are almost 200 recommendations in the 125-page report, aimed at improving rail service in Ontario.

VIA OPERA TRAINS will run again this July, package tours from Montreal and Quebec to the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Departure dates are Jul 4, 10, 16, 18, 11, 15, 23, 25, 28, 17, 22 and 24. Last year 1200 people used them.

AN OPEN HOUSE will be held Sunday June 7 by VIA, on the last day of National Transportation Week. The event, entitled "Panorama VIA", will be at Montreal Central Station between 10am and 5pm. An 8-car train of dining, sleeper, cafe-coach, dome, coach, Dayniter, club and club-lounge cars will be open.

"PRINCESS OF VANCOUVER", 26-year old CP Rail ferry, retires from the Vancouver-Nanaimo run May 30. The B.C. government is considering acquiring the ship for a run between Powell River B.C. and Comox on Vancouver Island.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY in Chicago ran out of money on May 27. It said that the various transit carriers in Chicago would have to get by as best they can until the end of June, when more sales tax collections will be available. Some bus lines are cutting service, but rail commuter lines are expected to remain in operation, altho the ICG is threatening a stiff fare increase and elimination of two lines. The CNW on May 26 went to court to demand payment from the RTA and said it wouldn't run the ex-Rock Island commuter service after May 31 without funds.

THE "TIJUANA TROLLEY", (the San Diego Trolley) is set to begin revenue operations on Jul 26, running every 15mins from the San Diego Amtrak station to San Ysidro at the Mexican border. The full one-way trip will cost $1.00.

CHICAGO PLANNING COMMISSION on May 14 approved the proposed 38-story office building for the site of the CNW railroad station, after preservationists failed in their efforts to have the station designated as an historical landmark.

OAKLAND AMTRAK STATION and BART's Oakland West station will get a connecting AC Transit bus as of Jun 7 (after a Jun 3 public hearing on the matter). Route 88 is to be re-routed via the BART station, and headways will be 12mins at peak periods, 15mins midday, 20mins Saturdays, 25mins Sundays, with 30mins after 6:30pm daily. The route will operate daily 6am to 12:30am, and buses will be equipped to handle wheelchairs.

WASHINGTON'S METRO SYSTEM experienced a 2.4% ridership drop in the past year, according to a late April announcement. The decrease has officials puzzled, and they think it could have been caused by two fare increases in half a year. They believe the drop is not a permanent thing.

NEW YORK'S MTA will have its severe financial problems scrutinized by a committee named by Governor Carey. The New York Times on May 20 editorialized that the appointment of a committee was the "last, worst hope for transit." The paper called it a "desperate exercise in fig-leaf politics", but held out hope that the result could turn out favorably.

WASHINGTON STATE FERRY system was hit by a 3-day strike in late May. On the first day of the strike, auto drivers reaching Seattle on the B.C. steamer "Princess Marguerite" from Victoria found their cars could not be unloaded, and they were forced to keep them aboard to be returned to Victoria the next morning.

LONG ISLAND SOUND ferry service should be improved and expanded in the next 20 years, concluded a joint New York-Connecticut report published May 1. Usage in the next decade could increase to more than 10 times its present level, the report said, to include commercial trucks which are not now carried, and year-round service by as many as 16 ferries.

THE GOVERNORS OF New York, New Jersey and Connecticut should meet to form a regional plan for transit and to resolve the financial crisis of New York's MTA, the city's Comptroller, Harrison J. Goldin, said on a radio broadcast May 24.

ANTI-FERRY BOAT Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, whose plan to abolish the Golden Gate Bridge District easily passed the Assembly Transportation Committee, wants to set up a new transit district to replace the present one, while turning over responsibility for the bridge to the state. Bridge tolls would continue to subsidize Golden Gate Transit buses but not ferryboats.

THE MAPLE LEAF BEGINS OPERATION

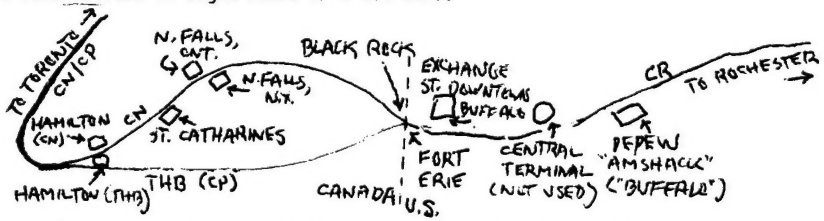
by William C. Kessel

The MAPLE LEAF is back as a New York-Toronto train, but this time it is a prime Amtrak-VIA venture instead of Lehigh Valley-Canadian National. On Sunday, Apr 26 the runs began, with crews changing at Niagara Falls, Ontario. CNR motorneers took a little time to learn the controls.

On Monday the 27th Governor Carey rode across the Border, and the conventional veranda-ed Lehigh Valley "private" car with a drumhead contrasted with the Amcoaches on TV clips. Ceremonies at the former LV freight house which is now Niagara Falls passenger station (the old Falls-side station and some right of way are gone, the latter for a little-used truckway) took half an hour.

The Governor's handshakes with Canadian officials apparently did not solve the big problem: customs delays which have been standard since these men stopped riding the trains, as is still done in Europe. Immigration seems to be a minor problem, but inspection of every 5-dollar toy and box of detergent stretches the 20-minute estimate interminably.

The former New York-Buffalo (Exchange St.) Amtrak train connected with a pair of RDC's owned by CP Rail (which recently bought the two-thirds share in the TH&B Railway that was long held by NC, NYC, PC and Conrail). That border crossing was at Black Rock NY-Fort Erie, Ont., where we have observed these delays. The new route covers more traffic generators: Niagara Falls NY, Niagara Falls, Ont., St. Catharines (misspelled in the Amtrak timetables). Both old and new trains are on CN track between the Hamilton area and Toronto. Both replaced the ADVANCE EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS. It is rarely recognized that few trains in classic days transited New York-Buffalo in eight hours or a bit more.



Map (not to scale) shows relative locations of tracks and stations.

Locals suggest that Amtrak's publicity and ads are barking up the wrong tree, and may continue to do so even if local ads try to sell Buffalo-New York or Buffalo-Toronto. Almost all Amtrak ads offer land "cruises" somewhere unstated, and those trains do well. The whole Empire Corridor is doing fairly well, but must be analyzed.

Full-page ads Apr 30 announced People's Air trips to Newark for $23-$35, and USAir and American Airlines have cut the LaGuardia or JFK fare to a maximum of $69. Meanwhile, the press releases show the NY-Toronto fares but not the Buffalo-Toronto fares. Thus the market eastbound is to Rochester, Syracuse and Albany. Old USAir and a newcomer ask $47 for the 65.6 miles (by rail) Buffalo to Rochester, or 70+¢ a mile. No cuts have been offered to Albany, for which the air ticket leaves small change from a $100 bill.

Toronto is not a threatening drive from Buffalo if one likes trucks on the superhighway, and it has a number of bus trips. Train arrival at Buffalo's new playground is too late for a show. Air travel is a very minor factor for the locals to Toronto. Thus the opportunities for business are along the Erie Canal.

Westbound passenger counts out of Buffalo used to center on 45, and eastbound about five. CP Rail's extra RDC was simply mass to throw signals. Toronto found

itself over-hotelled a few years ago, and perhaps a rail-hotel package might sell.

Meanwhile, trains 62 and 65, formerly the SALT CITY EXPRESS, have been extended west to Niagara Falls, a move which will help earlybirds go east too.

FIGHTING TO SAVE THE TRAINS: THE FORMATION OF THE EMPIRE STATE PASSENGERS ASSOCIATION

by Ted Scull

Given the unprecedented crisis facing all forms of mass transit thruout the country, and given our task to work for its survival, I, as a member of the newly-formed Empire State Passengers Association, would like to share with RTN readers what one small, fledgling organization is striving to accomplish.

ESPA got moving as an official state association in Utica Station on a cold Saturday, Jan 24, 1981. Bylaws, elections, official speakers and our courses of action formed the agenda. Then on Mar 21 a hard core of newly-elected officers, including the regional coordinators, traveled to Albany/Rensselaer for a working meeting. Those coming up from New York arrived on the well-patronized ADIRONDACK.

We retired to the Geneva Restaurant, a country block away from the Rensselaer Station, ordered lunch and waited for the others to come in from the western part of the state on the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS at 1:30pm. With twelve present, Jim Feeney, our president, began the meeting.

He wisely started with the good news that the thru train to Toronto would run as planned beginning Apr 26, that the SALT CITY EXPRESS would be extended to Niagara Falls after all, and that the downtown Pittsfield MA station would open Apr 26. Jim also reported that Amtrak and NARP were going to join forces to fight the funding cutbacks proposed by the Reagan Administration. NARP would be mailing to all its members paths of action.

We then took up the main business of planning an ESPA flyer, a manual on how to lobby for rail and mass transit. The publication would be in the style of the ESPA Express, a folded format that would open up into four 8½x11 panels. The contents would include a statement about the decline in quality of rail and transit as the result of the public decision to decrease investment in nearly all areas of surface public transportation. A comparison would be made with Europe and Japan, where investment (a better term than "subsidies") for the most part is on the increase. There is the need to do long-term transportation planning for energy conservation and to reduce our dependency on foreign oil imports. Congress made a commitment to Amtrak and to all of us, and people should be informed about this, and the large investment in Amtrak's equipment and passenger facilities. Most people who have ridden Amtrak lately say it is in the best shape ever.

Mass transportation supporters need to stand up and be counted by writing their Congressmen, the media, conservation groups, handicapped organizations, the unions, state legislators, state DOT, chambers of commerce (tourist industry), major rail suppliers and large companies with facilities along a rail line, and Amtrak with support (and criticism only where appropriate).

Letters or mailgrams should be short and contain relevant and accurate information and points of view and should be directed to a specific person. Articles, columns and editorials in the media should receive written responses ranging from a sentence or two up to a maximum of 100 words. A number of members present have had letters published in newspapers, and we all agreed it was important to get the facts, in enough depth, spread them around, and make sure they are appropriate for the reader. Also included would be guidelines for meeting officials and conducting an interview. It is just as important to remind and support our friends in high places as it is to take issue with the opposition. Transportation was not an election issue, and transportation funding as a distinct issue must be pulled out of the overall proposed tax cut package and fought for on its own in an open forum at

every level. In New York State we have to tie together the interlocking connections of Amtrak to the commuter lines and the bus/subway systems.

To assist letter writers, the ESPA flyer will give names, addresses and some suggestion of content. People not accustomed to writing need to be encouraged that it is both necessary and quite easy.

We discussed encouraging support for local organizations, including ESPA. Printing costs and postage are a large part of an organization's budget, and hence the need for dues. The ESPA flyer would include officers' names, addresses and telephone numbers to create a channel thru which people can offer assistance.

ESPA will issue a press release stating that Amtrak and mass transit are in jeopardy, and will print up simple bulletins to alert travelers to the issues, and distribute them in stations and on trains. For long distance Amtrak riders out of Penn Station, the bold type might read: "Are you aware that the train you have chosen to take today may not be around tomorrow?", and include reasons why this may happen, why trains are a necessary part of our country's transportation system, what a long way Amtrak has come in ten years, and what they can do to stand up and be counted.

Planning further down the line, we agreed to work on increasing ridership in general and especially on the ADIRONDACK line thru specific advertising directed at local and New York City markets and the publication of a useful ride-guide for this scenic route.

All members present were asked to describe what they had done thus far in contacting officials, letter writing, etc., and we agreed that officers must be held accountable for their work, or lack of it.

We discussed where we might attract new members--rail-based interests, travelers, universities, travel agents, businesses, and lastly the Syracuse State Fair. We will have a booth there with a promotional slide show and lively commentary to attract interest.

Most everyone present was able to stay at least until the departure of the NIAGARA RAINBOW for New York at 6:05pm. My position at the board meeting was that of a reporter. I believe that meetings of this nature are necessary all over the country, and the RTN staff would like to hear from other groups involved in supporting train service.

THE 4449 STEAMS AGAIN--CONCLUSION

by Joel Kamisher

BRINGING THE STEAMER TO THE RAILFAIR

Klamath Falls, Apr 26: On arrival here the night before, the crew removed the bad fuel from the 4449, and prepared the engine for the final segment of the run to Sacramento, while most of the passengers dozed in nearby homes and motels. A group of shippers was entertained in the "Airslie's" private dining room, while trip committee members dined in Sierra Western diner 156 "Lake Peppinl" on Saturday night.

The train left Klamath Falls two hours late, due to problems connecting the diesel steam lines and because two passengers fell ill and left just before departure. Because of the delay and bad weather at the original photo site, the fate of the event was uncertain. At one point an SP official told me the event was cancelled. A few hours later, the train reached a siding known as Andisite, where one of the lounge cars was supposed to be worked on. A few minutes after we stopped, the crew announced that this was the location of the photo stop, and passengers poured off the train into the snow for the traditional event.

The Mayor of Portland and other invited guests who made the 2-day trip never went hungry with hearty breakfasts, lunches and dinners. Saturday they feasted on cream of asparagus soup, orange-avocado salad, lamb chops, peas and German fried

potatoes, with vanilla ice cream for dessert. Other guests had juice and pastry for breakfast and cold cuts, cheese and salad for lunch. The lounge was open continuously, providing free soft drinks, beer and wine to the media and civic leaders aboard. Paying passengers got continental breakfasts and box lunches.

The special pulled into Black Butte 2hrs, 25mins late for a water stop. Black Butte is the point where the original line rejoins the main. That segment, which rejoins the main at Klamath Falls, has too many sharp curves for the 4449.

At Dunsmuir CA several people in Old West costumes greeted the train. Here a new engine crew took over the diesel helper, and a bus load of SP guests boarded the special. They were originally to board farther south at Redding, but the delay allowed them a longer ride. At Redding, SP public relations man George Kraus was almost left behind while he tried to arrange a connection for a passenger affected by the delay.

Above: The photo runby at Chilliquin on the first day of the trip. Below: The second day's photo stop, at Andisite. Photos by Gene Hines.

The temperature rose considerably as the train sped south thru the Central Valley. We were 3½ hours late reaching Orland, where about 3000 people turned out to see the fire department fill the tender. A new train crew took over here, as the one that got on at Klamath Falls would reach the 12-hour mark long before Sacramento. South of Orland the train made a brief stop to check a hot journal. The train made another stop at Tehama to release the diesel so it could return to San Francisco and the 4449 could pull the train unassisted. The diesel ran ahead as far as Davis just in case it was needed.

During the Tehama stop a TV station helicopter, following the train since Dunsmuir, landed so the reporter and cameraman could board. Several private planes followed the train along various parts of the route, and a Highway Patrol helicopter watched over much of the California segment.

At 9:05, 3½ hours late, the 4449 pulled into Sacramento. While passengers had dinner in Old Sacramento near the Railroad Museum, the 4449, crew cars and the "Airslie" were cut out, and the rest of the train was turned and readied for a return to Oakland under diesel power.

ONE WEEKEND IN MARCH

A SUMMARY OF MAJOR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES ON THE AMTRAK SYSTEM ON FRIDAY-SUNDAY MARCH 20-22, AS TAKEN FROM OFFICIAL RECORDS

March 20

Numbers of standees on Amtrak trains today were estimated as follows: 40 on train 365, the BLUE WATER LIMITED, leaving East Lansing; 50 on train 169, the COLONIAL, leaving Alexandria; 100 on train 177, the YANKEE CLIPPER, at New Haven.

The Bonne Carre Bridge near New Orleans is still out of service; 117 passengers were bused southbound from McComb from train 59 of the 19th (the CITY OF NEW ORLEANS) and 105 were bused northbound New Orleans-McComb for train 58 of the 19th. The latter train was delayed 41mins for buses to arrive.

A MoPac freight derailment at 6:30am at Jefferson TX blocked the single track and caused train 21 of the 19th, the INTER-AMERICAN, to detour over the Cotton Belt Texarkana-Big Sandy (with no delay). Missed stations of Marshall & Longview were served by "alternate transportation." Track was opened 3:15pm CST today.

An SP freight derailed 12 cars at Woodburn OR at 2:30am, blocking the single track. Trains 751 (the WILLAMETTE VALLEY) and 796 (the MOUNT RAINIER) between Portland & Eugene were annulled and buses substituted. Train 751's equipment was used for train 796 Portland-Seattle. Train 14 of the 19th (n.b. COAST STARLIGHT) was held at the derailment site for 146mins until track reopened. Track reopened 3:31pm. Passengers missing connection to Vancouver BC were bused there.

The STATE HOUSE, train 303, was found to have an overheated wheel on engine 298 at Bloomington, and ICG freight engine 8315 was substituted, but it had problems near Lincoln and engine 2520 was added. At Ridgely an engine was cut off #304 to substitute on 303. Total delay, train 303 108mins; train 304 10mins.

The SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4 of the 18th was without head-end power between Topeka and Kansas City due to a failure in engine 291. Train was refueled at Argentine (10mis east of K.C.) because of previous problems with fuel racks at Newton. Delay: 103mins Topeka, 37mins Argentine, 17mins Kansas City.

The PALMETTO, train 90, was delayed an hour at Yemassee SC when an SCL freight burst an air hose heading into a siding to meet the Amtrak train.

The LAKE CITIES, train 352, struck a 1977 American Motors automobile at milepost 20, Woodruff Rd Crossing, south of Gibraltar MI at 7:38pm CST, critically injuring the driver. The train, Turbo units 68 & 69, had an angle cock broken and was delayed 25mins.

The SHENANDOAH, train 32, left 30 passengers unboarded at Athens OH because of lack of space. Amtrak arranged to run a Greyhound bus Athens-Washington for the 30, communicating to them thru the Athens Police Dept, as the station is unmanned.

A group traveling Cincinnati-Washington on the CARDINAL, train 50, found the special breakfast items they had requested not to be aboard. Amtrak arranged to board the supplies on tomorrow's train 51 for transfer to #50 at Charlottesville.

A crew member of train 97, the SILVER METEOR, cut his left thumb on a sharp edge of a pantry door frame. He was detrained at Ocala for treatment.

A passenger intending to board train 81 of the 19th (SILVER STAR) was told by the conductor, who had taken her ticket, to wait for the train to make a second stop before boarding (at Kissimmee). The train made the second stop, but no door was opened, and the passenger was left on the platform. Amtrak refunded her ticket and gave her a complimentary bus ticket.

A passenger on the northbound CRESCENT, train 20, reported her backpack stolen while she slept. Her father was reported "irate" over the matter.

A special train ran today Atlanta-Washington for the DeKalb County (GA) Safety Patrol.

Unnamed train 413 was delayed 23mins at Springfield MA when air brakes would not release on RDC 10; train 410's equipment--SPV 992 & 995--were substituted.

The SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 3 of the 19th, was delayed 25mins at Needles when repairs were made to a strut arm on car 39905.

Train 61, the MONTREALER, was delayed 36mins by Springfield for customs and for a meet with train 60.

INTER-AMERICAN delays: train 21 was delayed 75mins on the ICG, TRRA & MP, but the railroads reported no delays. Train 22 was 98mins late at Little Rock due to 3 freight meets and a tower signal failure on ATSF, and two freights interfering on MP. Train 24 lost 24mins due to an SP freight ahead. Train 23 of the 19th was 115mins late at Houston due to the connection with train 21 at Temple.

Minor delays: Train 6, the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, lost 24mins by Sparks for various minor reasons. Train 11, the COAST STARLIGHT, was 22mins late at Eugene for various reasons. Train 14 hit an auto between Coyote & San Jose, at milepost 61, with no injuries, and was delayed 28mins (only 15mins late at Davis). Train 40, the BROADWAY LIMITED, left Chicago 29mins late after engine 333 had to have all its wheels trued; train 41 left New York 30mins late due to a power outage. The DESERT WIND, train 36, was 50mins late at Milford due to COS on main line.

No failures of on-board equipment were reported today in the Amtrak system.

March 21

With the Bonne Carre Bridge still out, 113 passengers were bused from New Orleans to McComb and 110 the opposite way for trains 58 and 59 of the 20th.

An SP freight at 5:40am MST derailed 29 cars between Lordsburg NM and Benson AZ (between Dragoon and Tully), blocking the single track. No detour was available to the SUNSET LIMITED, and train 1 of the 20th terminated at Tucson and the cars were turned to become train 2 of the 20th, while train 2 of the 20th terminated at El Paso and was turned to become train 1 of the 20th, with passengers bused between the two--5 buses each direction for 186 passengers El Paso-Tucson and 214 passengers Tucson-El Paso. Train 2 left El Paso 225mins late, and train 1 left Tucson 30mins late. Four passengers bused to Tucson missed the train when their bus was late, and they were transferred to a regularly scheduled bus there.

The MOUNT VERNON, train 189, was terminated at Newark NJ after engine 968 separated from its 5 cars a short distance east of the station at 8:25pm. The engine was recoupled but had air brake problems and ran at 5mph into the station, where 250 passengers were transferred to train 179, the SENATOR. Unit 968 ran around the equipment and deadheaded it back to New York. Passengers were delayed 67mins. No. 179 was delayed 6mins, two Conrail locals were delayed 9 and 10mins, and train 621 was delayed 11mins, held at Philadelphia for connections off #179.

At midnight tonight (12:01am Mar 22) United Transportation Union employees staged a wildcat strike between Texarkana and Laredo TX. The INTER-AMERICAN, train 21 of the 20th, was terminated at South San Antonio, and 9 passengers were bused to Laredo. All pickets are expected to be gone at 6am Mar 22 as a court order was issued, and train 21 of the 20th was turned at San Antonio to become train 22 of the 22nd. Passengers at Laredo were bused to San Antonio.

The CRESCENT, train 20, was delayed 37mins when a Southern Rwy freight derailed 2 cars making a crossover move from no. 1 to no. 2 track at Ardmore Yard, north of Atlanta. Train 20 had to be operated thru the yard.

Train 79, the DEWITT CLINTON, a Turboliner, at 10:05pm west of Beacon struck debris placed on the track by vandals. Lead Turbo 159 had its gearbox smashed and fuel tank damaged, but could run at 5mph. Train ran from milepost 61 to 70, where the crew drained the fuel tank. At 11:10pm the train moved on to Poughkeepsie, where Turbo 158 was cut off. Conrail engines 5037 & 5007 were added. Delay: 229".

The CARDINAL, train 51, at about 10:02pm at milepost 21.5, Sideburn VA, struck and killed an unidentified trespasser on the tracks. There was no delay to the train, as the crew was unaware of the occurrence at the time.

Because of heavy patronage, the COLONIAL, train 174, ran out of sandwiches,

(continued on page 21)

AMTRAK'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

PART TWO - CONCLUSION

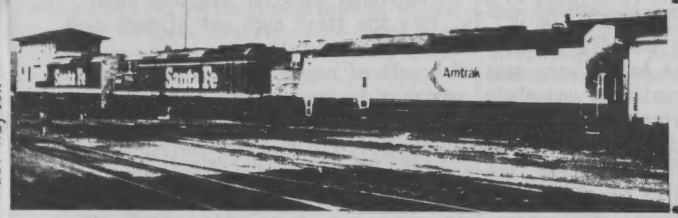
The success that Amtrak has been having in its tenth year can in large part be attributed to the amount of new equipment that it is now using. Almost magically, a number of problems have greatly diminished with the advent of shiny, attractive, trouble-free passenger cars. This fact points up a theme that emerges when one surveys the first decade of Amtrak's existence--that of the necessity of good equipment. And two other important themes stand out in trying to understand Amtrak--politics and work quality.

Amtrak was a political matter from the very beginning, as the first part of this article suggested. It apparently will remain so, at least until Amtrak becomes self-sufficient, a goal that President Alan Boyd is now seeking.

The politics of Amtrak include not only the pressure to add or subtract routes or the manipulation of the Amtrak budget but also the orientation of the corporation's leadership. Amtrak came into being with a president who had instructions from the Administration to oversee the gradual demise of rail passenger service. Thus we saw a great deal of foot dragging in its early years with respect to such matters as ordering new equipment. It wasn't until Nov 1972 that Amtrak ordered its first new equipment--40 of the SDP40F locomotives that would see them thru their early years. The first of them wasn't delivered until Jun 1973 (the first use was on the SUPER CHIEF on Jun 22, 1973), when Amtrak was already over two years old. At the time, the justification for buying them was that they were so similar to freight locomotives that they could be sold to the railroads if necessary. There was still the belief that Amtrak would gradually go out of business. The pressure was on Amtrak to get some new equipment, and thus on Dec 28, 1972 Amtrak announced that it would buy two TurboTrains from Canadian National and lease two Turboliners from France to run on short routes out of Chicago. The French-built Turbos did not arrive until Aug 6, 1973, and they, along with the two CN TurboTrains, were a drop in the bucket of Amtrak's passenger car equipment needs.

The pressure continued to be applied for new cars, and on Jul 26, 1973 Amtrak asked passenger car makers for design proposals for new passenger cars. This was the beginning of the move to the Superliners that are now on the rails. Amtrak asked for the "next generation " of passenger cars, and specifically stated that bi-level cars were not ruled out. The idea of bi-levels was to hold as many people as possible per car without sacrificing comfort. At the time, RTN wrote that "Amtrak's Roger Lewis said he wants a 1980's-quality car. Defending the long delay Amtrak has shown in attempting to obtain new equipment, Mr. Lewis indicated that it was wise to wait to test the market, since Amtrak's requirements now are different from what they were at the outset. Also, Amtrak wants cars that will last 20 years, so a good deal of preparation was required, Lewis indicated." It wasn't until Apr 2, 1975 that Pullman-Standard had accepted Amtrak's order for what would later be called the Superliners (and it took until Feb 26, 1979 to get the first Superliner car into revenue service--and far into 1980 before many of the new cars were deployed about the system).

So the problem of good, reliable equipment was acute thru many of Amtrak's years--it was a problem that should have been tackled in May of 1971. President Roger Lewis was pressured to resign finally in Nov 1974, and a railfan was found to replace him: Paul Reistrup, who took office Mar 1, 1975. When Reistrup took over, he said that no sleepers, lounges or diners for long distance trains were in Amtrak's order for 762 cars. He corrected this.



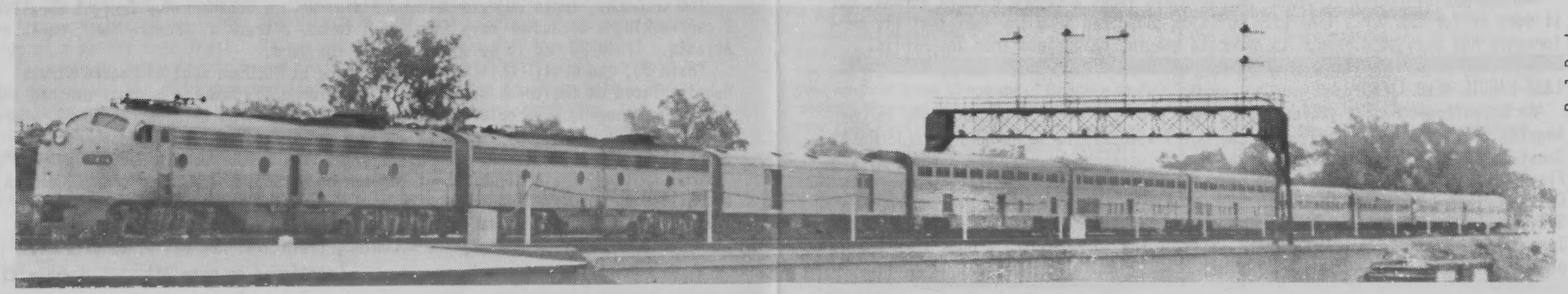
Paul Rayton

On Jun 27, 1973 the new SDP40F engines had been operating less than one week, seen on the SUPER CHIEF behind two Santa Fe diesels.

The Amfleet cars that seem to have been around forever actually began revenue service only on Aug 7, 1975, after Reistrup was well-installed as Amtrak head. The first Amfleet cars had been ordered from the Budd Co. on Oct 12, 1973. The short headway in obtaining them stemmed from their similarity to the Metroliner cars, which Budd was already tooled up to build.

Reistrup was quite the opposite of Lewis in many ways. He promoted the idea of rail passenger service aggressively, and under him a number of new routes began operation. Unfortunately, Amtrak's work quality did not reach a high standard during this period. There continued to be a lot of sloppy maintenance of Amtrak equipment and many complaints about the quality of on-board service. During the Lewis era, the "horror story" became frequent, particularly during severe winter months. The winter of 1973-4, when ridership was up because of the energy crisis, was one of many such horror tales. Amtrak's deteriorating equipment could not stand up to the punishment of a severe winter, and many riders trying the train for the first time were disappointed by their experiences. The next winter, Amtrak tried to avoid these problems by adopting the practice of holding trains in stations if there was bad weather ahead, not letting them into a blizzard only

Amtrak's TEXAS CHIEF, later to be the LONE STAR and still later to be discontinued, looked like this on June 9, 1972 as it ran northbound at Joliet IL. Amtrak used UP diesels with the railroad name painted out during that summer, as the regular Santa Fe units were needed for the CHIEF. The car consist was much like the train used under Santa Fe's private operation. Amtrak had as yet no new locomotives; they would appear on this train in a little over a year.



Paul Rayton

to be frozen up. In the winter of 1976-7, under Reistrup, a new problem cropped up: the SDP40F engine, the mainstay of Amtrak's long distance trains, was found to be derailment-prone under certain conditions, and the Burlington Northern put speed limits on the engines. Amtrak service almost fell apart that winter, with the added problem of very low temperatures again. A year before that, Amtrak was just beginning to decide to electrify its fleet of conventional cars. They had waited too long on that matter. Rail supporters had been urging it on them for some time, but Amtrak didn't listen, partly because it had poor information as to the costs. But rail supporters showed that Ringling Brothers had done it with their circus trains, and it would work. Electric cars were not available for long distance trains yet in 1976-7, and freezing was a big problem. Some routes actually had to suspend operation during cold periods.

The Amfleet cars, the first of which went into revenue service on the northbound STATESMAN on Aug 7, 1975, showed that electric hotel power was the reliable wave of the future for passenger cars. On Jan 25, 1978 Amtrak's Board of Directors approved going ahead with rebuilding of 59 conventional cars for electric power, to re-equip the LAKE SHORE LIMITED. On Oct 16, 1979 the first such set of cars went into revenue service on the LAKE SHORE.

The Reistrup years at Amtrak were ones of growth of routes and the deployment of new equipment, but of continued underlying weakness in the quality of Amtrak's work force. Congress complained that Amtrak pushed it too aggressively for funding, but Congressional support continued to be favorable. Reistrup had reorganized Amtrak into regional components, but in the long run this reorganization didn't work all that well. A milestone of these years was the date Apr 1, 1976, when Amtrak took over ownership of the Northeast Corridor. There was a heady reaction within the Amtrak organization--at last the corporation owned some of its own tracks!

The Reistrup era came to an end Jun 1, 1978 when Alan Boyd took over the presidency, at the time of a severe Administration cutback threat--Carter's folks wanted to hack 40% of the system off. Boyd has proved to be just the person Amtrak needed at this period in its history--solid, stable, competent, optimistic about the future of passenger trains. He reorganized Reistrup's reorganization of Amtrak and set about improving the quality of Amtrak's work force.

It was the gasoline shortage of summer, 1979--a shortage that came on abruptly for Americans who had begun to forget the energy crisis of 1973-4--that at the last minute saved the Amtrak system from decimation at the hands of Carter's boys. Amtrak suffered a 16% cutback instead of the 40% that was planned. It was bad enough--a number of important routes were lost that eventually will have to be replaced--trains like the NATIONAL LIMITED, the FLORIDIAN, the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA and the LONE STAR. And it gained a new political train, the DESERT WIND, connecting Los Angeles, Las Vegas and Ogden. It was the beginning of a slow move to run a "City of Everywhere" train as Union Pacific had done.

Other equipment milestones were the first ordering of F40PH diesels (30 of them on May 8, 1975, to replace the SDP40F's) and the later rebuilding of SDP's into an F40 configuration. Speed limits could once again be increased with the replacement of the SDP's.

At the end of its first decade Amtrak again faces a severe cutback threat, but it does so for the first time with optimism generated from the fact that its performance has been good enough to generate genuine enthusiasm from the public.

LAST-MINUTE NEWS ITEMS:

An unconfirmed report indicates that the proposed overnight Sacramento to Los Angeles train has been approved for an Oct 1 startup, to be named the CALIFORNIAN. Consist is expected to be 7 60-seat Amcoaches, a diner-lounge, and 3 10/6 Heritage Fleet sleepers..... The state of Minnesota has approved funds to keep the Twin Cities-Duluth portion of the NORTH STAR operating thru Oct 30..... The southbound SILVER METEOR, with engine 333 on the point, derailed at 12:30pm May 26 in Lochloosa FL at 75mph. There were 127 passengers and 19 crew, and 6 were slightly hurt..

REPORT ON RAILFAIR 1981

by Sylvia and Ted Blishak

Last year a rumor spread around railfan circles that the "Big Steamup of 1981" would happen at the opening of the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. The rumor became a reality, tho the name was changed to Railfair '81.

MAY 1, 1981: We wait at the bustling Oakland Amtrak station to take the eastbound SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR to Sacramento, where Railfair '81 opens tomorrow. We notice how differently people wait for trains and planes--here everyone is excited, happy, moving about and talking. A great contrast to an airport, where people sit silently and tensely.

The ZEPHYR's Superliners are preceded by an SP SDP-45, and behind the Amtrak cars are some SP cars, silver with a red nameboard: sleeper 292, baggage car 298 (equipped with refrigerators), diner-lounge 290, and French Quarter lounge 291--former SUNSET LIMITED with wrought iron grillwork around the bar. These cars will be cut off at Sacramento and used by the SP Sales and Marketing Dept. for entertaining during Railfair week.

Today is Amtrak's 10th birthday, and the on-board crew are sporting smart new navy and burgundy uniforms as part of the celebration. A petition to save Amtrak is being circulated by a group called Demand Adequate Rail Travel (DART), and they are getting plenty of signers.

This is our first ride on a train with a Sightseer lounge car. The ride is smooth, the view is good, and the atmosphere is sociable. Sitting next to us is Gene Hines, RTN reader and photo contributor. But our pleasant journey ends too quickly as we drift over the river bridge in Sacramento. On the adjacent track in the station is a display consist, with both Amfleet and Superliner cars, which Amtrak will open to the public tomorrow.

As we approach the Railfair area, we see smoke and steam curling over the building tops, and we recognize the whistle voices of the two big UP engines, #8444 and #3985, just arrived from Cheyenne. Heading on foot under a freeway overpass (I-5 unfortunately now runs thru the middle of town), we find we've gone back about 100 years in time. We find ourselves in an environment of cobblestone streets, boardwalks and old brick buildings housing shops and restaurants. This is the recently-restored Old Sacramento area where the museum is located. Everyone here seems quite excited about Railfair '81; the shopkeepers are all wearing engineer's hats and red bandanas.

Just beyond the restored Central Pacific station is SP's Walnut Grove line, and here, by the river's edge, are an assortment of steam and diesel engines on display. Our eyes are drawn to the regal #4449, resplendent in her new orange and scarlet paint job (her original Daylight livery). For us, she is the star of the show--the Rolls Royce of steam engines! She is quiet when idling, and whispers smoothly as she strolls along the tracks. Her engineer, Doyle McCormick (who held down the right-hand seat during her Freedom Train days) is standing nearby chatting with UP steam engineers Frank Acord and Tom Stewart. Steam fans regard these three with the same kind of awe we all have for the astronauts--they are American folk heroes.

SP is displaying a new diesel as well as a rotary snowplow and a peculiar-looking dynamometer car. A GE diesel, dwarfed by the nearby Challenger, is painted orange and green and destined for the National Railways of Mexico.

There are already some TV news trucks on hand, as well as many excited railfans, and several hundred Railway and Locomotive Historical Society members, who have come from all corners of the country for their convention this weekend.

We're up at 6am on Saturday for some engine-watching. The Tom Thumb, with its vertical boiler steamed up, is there. A man wearing a Chessie Systems cap fills its little firebox with a tiny coal shovel. This replica is here thru the courtesy of the B&O Railroad Museum. Nearby is diamond-stacked American Standard Locomotive #8, provided by Short Line Enterprises, Inc. A Climax engine with slanted cylinders is flying the Canadian flag. We're disappointed with the lack of organization with which the small steam engines are displayed. Many aren't labelled or identified, so we can't tell who owns them, where they came from, or when they were restored. We did NOT see the John Bull engine; either it did not arrive from England or it was hidden away in the engine barn.

A man wearing a 4449 jacket walks by, and we learn that he is RTN reader Russ Sperry of Ventura CA, a volunteer who spent several hours yesterday washing and polishing the brilliantly gleaming engine.

Russ takes us over to the "49" (we learn that the engine crews refer to the engines by the last two digits) and introduces us to Fireman Mike Warren, who makes a long-standing dream of ours come true by inviting us up into the cab.

Mike was on the original restoration project when the engine was resurrected for the Freedom Train. Mike is an SP brakeman in real life, and he says that while SP merely tolerated the 4449 in 1976-77, they have been very cooperative this time. The 4449 hadn't been under steam since 1977, so some mechanical work was needed to get her ready for this trip.

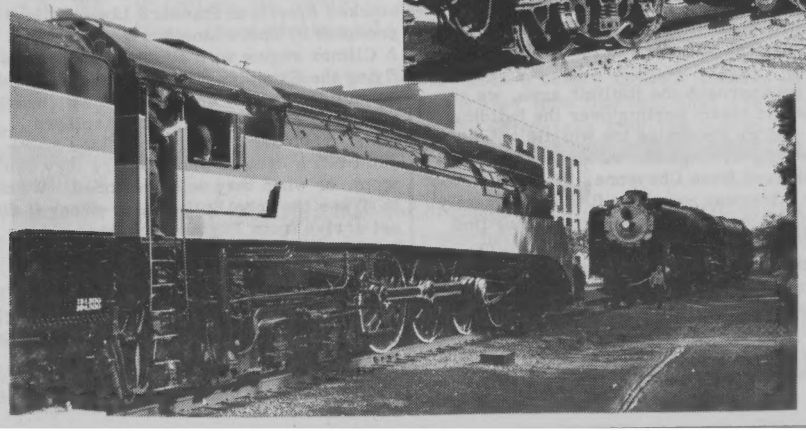
As we talk, a crowd of fans gathers outside, and they call up to Mike, asking him to blow the whistles, ring the bell, and toot the air horn. He tells us, "Whistles are meant for signals, not for fun--but my professionalism is at war with my enthusiasm" and he blows the high-pitched whistle on the fireman's side, then lets us have a couple of tugs on the cord that blows the steamboat whistle on the engineer's side.

We stroll over to the Amtrak station to see the Family Days display, which is drawing a good crowd. Parked nearby is the SP equipment that came over on yesterday's ZEPHYR, now joined by business car "Airslie." Hard hats are fussing about under the steam-powered cars, while several SP police stand guard. The cars are chained off, with signs reading "Private Cars, not on Display."

We walk up to the bridge over the river where we can look down at the Railfair display. The little Gypsy engine, with her odd little rotating cog out in front, is now under steam. The Bay Area Electric Railroad Association's special train from Oakland arrives, using the former RENO FUN TRAIN equipment; the markers are carried by a two-tone green Sierra Western car. The equipment looks much the worse for wear, but is jammed with 750 enthusiastic fair-goers.

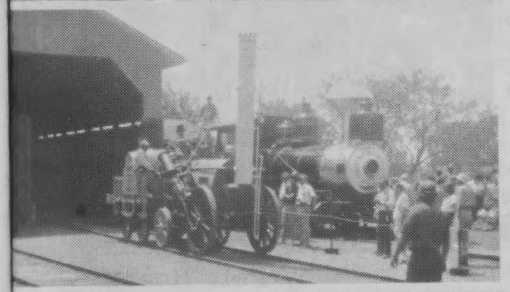
We cross over to the Yolo County side of the river, and walk along the bank thru the kind of scenery in which Tom Sawyer would have felt right at home. The only sign of civilization on this side is a giant yellow tent pitched on astroturf, with rolling lawns sweeping down to the water. It proves to be a restaurant called the Inntent. While we enjoy lunch here, we also enjoy missing the dedication speeches going on across the river. At 12:42 conversation stops as all of the steam engines' whistles combine in a deafening blast--the museum has been officially dedicated. (When the dedication speeches were finished, the 4449 and the Rocket, from England, slowly moved forward to break a ribbon stretched across the track, officially opening the museum. The opening speeches had been brief; Governor Brown and Caltrans Director Adriana Gianturco both used the occasion to urge that passenger trains be kept running.)

We have tickets for the first performance of the "Song of the Iron Horse", a musical pageant featuring live performers, both human and engine. Bleachers are set up around the turntable outside the museum, and several costumed musical groups and individual performers sing and dance. Different steam engines enter and leave the "stage" on cue, their whistles being incorporated into the music.



(Right:) Logging locomotive built in 1928 by Climax Loco Works. (Below:) The 4449 and the 8444 face each other at the Railfair. Photos by the authors.

A poignant moment occurs when, while the song "City of New Orleans" is being sung, an Amtrak whistle drifts across the river. The gleaming Superliners of the eastbound ZEPHYR begin to glide across the bridge to the strains of "...this train's got the disappearing railroad blues." (Reader, please dry your eyes and give your Congressman one more phone call!)



(Top:) The UP's 8444 enters the outdoor stage during the "Song of the Iron Horse". (Center:) The famous Stephenson's "Rocket" from England, behind which is an engine believed to be the Santa Fe No. 5 "Little Butter Cup". (Bottom:) Visitors filed thru Amtrak equipment on display at the Sacramento station near the Railfair. Photos by Joel Kamisher.

A young newsboy sings "Extra, extra, read all about it, a new train's a-coming now, the 4449!" Then the "49" herself steams onstage to the strains of "Chattanooga Choo Choo" and wild cheers from the crowd.

The closing number is an exciting one, as a voice speaks the historic line, "What was it the engines said, pilots touching head to head..." Then the 8444 and the 4449 chuff out to center stage and face each other, saluting with whistles blasting and steam billowing.

After the pageant, we tour the museum itself. (This is the kind of place that one will have to go back to more than once to assimilate--to describe it all would make an article in itself.) First, we experience a kind of sound and light show, with railroad music and a rear-projection screen flashing railroad pictures on both sides of the room. Then the guide explains that a short movie is part of the regular program, but due to some kind of a breakdown, it will not be shown. We go on to the rolling stock displays. To reach this area, one must traverse a walk-thru diorama of a Donner Pass construction scene with a 4-4-0, the Gov. Stanford (Central Pacific #1), resplendent in gray and black, emerging from a granite tunnel and about to enter a snowshed.

There are some static displays, with antique engines and cars beautifully painted and polished. One that captures our attention is the "Gold Coast", the private wooden car that Lucius Beebe and Charles Clegg called home, complete with furniture and fireplace, giving the spectator a glimpse into an elegant and unique lifestyle. The most engaging displays are the ones that involve you as a participant. One of these is the 1926 Canadian National Pullman "St Hyacinthe". As we file past the 10 sections, drawing room and compartment, the car rocks, and sound and light effects are added so one really feels he is hurtling thru the night out of Montreal. Three costumed attendants explain the details of how the car works, and a Pullman conductor says, as we reach the end of the car, "Well, since you don't have tickets, we're going to put you off here in Toronto!" Everyone is having fun.

Some of the displays, like the moving cutaway of a steam engine, have telephone receivers so you can pick up a phone and listen to a recorded commentary without the sound pollution of a loudspeaker.

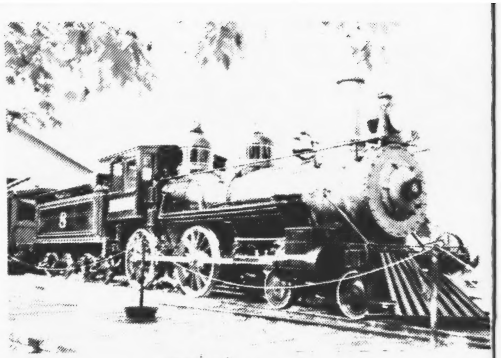
We noticed one error: a photo of the bullet-nosed 1939 TWENTIETH CENTURY LIMITED was labelled as a Penn Central train. In the omissions department, there was no reference to Amtrak (or VIA) that

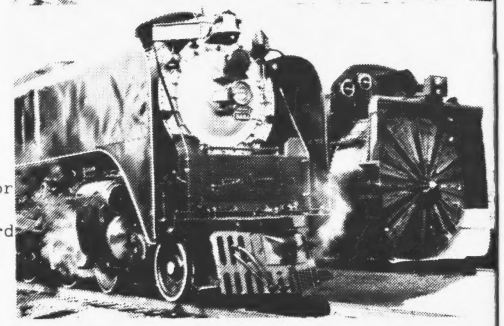
we could see. But perhaps this is appropriate, since Amtrak isn't history yet, and let's hope it won't be soon!

We're out at sunup on Sunday to watch the two UP engines back up, under their own steam, so the 8444 can be refueled by a Western Pacific truck. (There is a little SP 0-6-0 coupled onto the back of the Challenger; it was under steam yesterday, but is quiet today. The man in the cab doesn't want to answer questions, and there is no indication of whom the engine belongs to now.)

Soon it is time to head for the station, where the westbound ZEPHYR will take us back to Oakland. Amtrak has set up a display of posters and brochures inside the station, and the people manning it are dressed as bumblebees! One of them, with a tape player concealed in his costume, cavorts to the tune of "Chattanooga Choo Choo" as he distributes Amtrak buttons. He even waltzes thru the ZEPHYR while it is in the station, crying, "I'm the last major bug in the Amtrak system!"

Our Superliner, with many railfans aboard is soon on the way west. We hear someone say, "If God had intended for people to fly, He'd never have given us railroads..."





(Top:) American Standard Locomotive #8 was loaned by Short Line Enterprises.
(Below:) The 8444 alongside an SP rotary snow plow. Photos by the authors.

BOSTON "T" UPDATE

by Pete Roehm

Boston's commuter rail system continues to operate altho still facing challenges some of which have already shortened the system's service base: the system is now intrastate only, having lost both the Providence and New Hampshire service in late Feb. A later financial crisis was threatening to curtail all service to communities outside the so-called MBTA District and local Retional Transit Authorities were working overtime to locate private bus operators just in case. An 11th-hour effort in the legislature came up with $3.2 million to carry the system thru the fiscal year and likely longer. No sooner had this issue been resolved when up came an attempt to eliminate all night service from North Station after 9pm. The public turned out in hearings to tell the MBTA that they wanted some late service and would be willing to accept a fare increase. As May arrived, the MBTA Board agreed and has kept two late trains per route and is looking for $560,000 to keep the service after the 60-day period it won. A possible fare increase may develop.

The GO cars from Toronto are on their way back, being sold to a Western Canada transit agency, and altho the MBTA won the right to keep 14 for a while longer, the new owners may not let them. Thus, schedules, frequencies and equipment allocations are being altered to reflect an expected very tight car problem for the rest of the year. Altho Morrison-Knudson won the contract to rebuild at least 26 Budd cars, they won't be ready until Mar 1982. The chances of leasing Amtrak equipment are iffy. The FRA won't let the MBTA restore to service some marginal Shoreliner cars sitting at the B&M's Boston Engine Terminal. Thus, standees will be the rule.

There continue to be rumors that factions within the MBTA want private bus lines to replace the commuter trains: Michaud Trailways to Beverly and Rockport, Kinson to Ipswich, Trombly Trailways to Lowell and Lawrence, Rabbit Transit to Fitchburg, and Suburban to Framingham. But a big booster of this, Transportation Secretary and ex-MBTA Chairman Barry Locke, was given leave without pay May 2 pending an investigation into possible illegal kickbacks in connection with MBTA leases at South Station as well as in-vehicle advertising. This could put the bus idea on the shelf and allow the new MBTA Chairman, James O'Leary, Locke's former assistant at EOTC (COT), to get the system, including commuter rail, back on track.

Meanwhile, the B&M, now in the black but still technically bankrupt, is being sold, following reorganization by the end of 1981, for $24-25 million to Timothy Mellon of Guilford CT, one of the Mellons of the Pittsburgh banking family. He had looked at P&LE, DT&J and ICG before deciding to purchase the B&M as "an investment". How this will affect commuter rail operation is unknown at this time.

Mixed train of thoughts

A WHISTLESTOP TOUR to lobby in support of the Amtrak budget was made by California Dept. of Transportation Director Adriana Gianturco and Amtrak Vice President Clark Tyler on May 5 and 6. The first day they rode the 11:30am SAN DIEGAN from San Diego to L.A., after an 11am press conference at the San Diego station. In L.A. another conference was held, followed by a trip to Bakersfield. The next morning the pair boarded the 6:05am SAN JOAQUIN and rode to Oakland, making press stops at Fresno, Madera, Merced, Riverside and Stockton. Upon arrival at Oakland, a press conference was held, and a rail advocacy coalition known as DART (Demand Adequate Rail Transportation) presented Clark Tyler with a bundle of over 30,000 signatures supporting Amtrak (see RTN photo at Left). Said Tyler, in part: "This is not the time to be cutting trains; this is the time to be expanding rail passenger service. You see on the tracks behind us here some of the most magnificent rail passenger equipment in the world. These beautiful cars will be part of a mothball fleet come the first of October if the Administration's budget goes thru." (See Quotes of the Week for some of Adriana Gianturco's remarks.) The cars Tyler referred to were the Superliner cars of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR which he and Gianturco then boarded to travel to Sacramento for another press conference, with a press stop also at Davis.....

★ ★ ★

AMTRAK'S TENTH BIRTHDAY celebration in Washington May 1-3 included a display of Superliner cars, as noted earlier. How did they get the tall cars into Washington? On Apr 22 train 50, the CARDINAL, left Chicago with the following consist: engines 336 & 236, cars 1355, 1168, 2911, 20223, 21033, 21831, 20118, Superliners 39914, 34018, 33002, 38018, and 32052. At Alexandria the Superliners were cut off and taken by an RF&P switcher to Potomac Yards. From there they went over the B&O around Washington to avoid the First Street tunnel into Union Station.....

EMERGING CORRIDOR REPORT was sent to Congress in April, evidently--we have not seen the report, but have a summary from the Association of American Railroads. Amtrak and the DOT disagreed over the results of the report, and they so stated in separate letters of transmittal to Congress. The DOT said that only nine of the corridors have even "marginal potential" for helping Amtrak cover 50% of costs with revenues. Amtrak said that projections in the report made by DOT are understated. The report found that the three best corridors were L.A.-San Diego, with 3¢ per passenger subsidy required; NY-Buffalo, with 8¢ per pm, and Philadelphia-Atlantic City, with 12¢. Seventeen of the 25 corridors had projections higher than 20¢. NY-Buffalo had a ridership potential of 310 million, and Phila-Atlantic City had 180 million, the two most promising corridors on that criterion.....

THE FOLLOWING GG-1 electric locomotives have been sold by Amtrak for $5000 each: #4890 to the B&O RR Museum in Baltimore; #4906 to the National RR Museum, St. Louis; #4913 to the Altoona PA RR Museum; #4916 to the Smithsonian Museum; #4917 to the Roanoke RR Museum; #4926 to the Central NY Chapter NRHS in Syracuse; #4935 to the Pennsylvania State RR Museum in Strasburg; and #4939 to the Illinois RR Museum.....

FILLING THE VOID that Auto-Train left: Trans Canada Auto Train Transport Ltd. of Vancouver, B.C. would like to get into the market left by the discontinued Auto-Train. T-CATT has been transporting cars (without passengers) across Canada on CN and CP Rail successfully for three years, and they'd like to run two routes, from Toronto and Montreal, to Florida, with cars also picked up in Boston, New York, Buffalo and Syracuse. Another group wants to start up a new Auto-Train operation, taking over the facilities used by the defunct company. They are the same group of investors who talked of bailing Auto-Train out during its bankruptcy. The advantages of their starting afresh include the lack of liability for past A-T debts (the old company owes about $24 million). The group of five, headed by G. James Frick of Washington, have reportedly asked William H. Moore, former Southern Railway Vice President, if he'd serve as head of operations of the new company. Meanwhile, two other companies carry cars between Florida and the Northeast: Auto-Bus, which takes passengers in buses and their cars on trailers; and Autolog Corp., that carries cars on trailers while their owners find their own personal transportation. Both of these companies expect increased business with the demise of Auto-Train.....

RETURN OF 4449 steam engine to Portland from California in mid-May involved another excursion which left Oakland May 16 and ran to Klamath Falls. While there overnight, the engine was discovered to have a leaking flue. A diesel hauled the excursion train the next day while the 4449 stayed in Klamath Falls. It was brought to Eugene on the 18th, behind a diesel (phto at right taken from southbound COAST STARLIGHT in the Cascades at 8:45 pm as the diesel, 4449 and short consist of cars waited in a siding; photo by Veste Buhle). At Eugene it was repaired and ran under its own power to Portland. A further report on that excursion is coming up in RTN.....

AMTRAK BOARD MEETING of May 27 was to include three commitment approval requests: for retirement and sale of 195 passenger cars (!); supplemental funding for installation of vacuum impregnation equipment at Wilmington maintenance facility; and new station at Hammond IN. As we go to press, we do not yet have a complete report on that meeting.....

BLUE WATER LIMITED and the Detroit Turbos now have Amfleet equipment instead of Turboliner. Amtrak has now consolidated all train operations (except Turbos) into Chicago's 12th St. Coach Yard (formerly PRR), and moved all equipment from the former Santa Fe Coach Yard. Plans call for Amtrak to close the Brighton Park Turbo Facility and move all Turbos east, as an economy move.....

CALIFORNIA WESTERN RAILROAD has ceased operation of the Super Skunk steam trains it was made known this month. The steamers were using too much fuel oil, and diesel engines have been substituted on the runs.....

THE LAKE CITIES will use Amfleet equipment, with no baggage car, starting Jun 5 eastbound and Jun 6 westbound; checked baggage will be discontinued on them.....

NEW YORK STATE wants to find by Sep 15 an operator for the "Adirondack Railway" route, Utica-Lake Placid, "who can complete the required rehabilitation without state funds and provide a non-subsidized freight and passenger service." Proposals must be submitted to the NY DOT by July 31.....

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM has given Kartemquin Films a grant of $86,000 to produce "The Last Pullman Car", a one-hour documentary covering the possible shutdown of Pullman-Standard works in Chicago, the infamous Pullman strike of

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1894 and the history of mass transit in America. The Pullman special is expected to be ready for the PBS "Non-Fiction Television" series by next year.....

THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN plans to reorganize into a holding company because federal regulations make it as a railroad difficult to raise capital. Railroad unions in early May sought an injunction against this action, charging that it would let the railroad divert money into other businesses (remember the Penn Central!). The BN denied that it would divert assets from the railroad.....

OLD MAP KIT

Consisting of Old State and Railroad maps 70-110 years old. All States. Some old County maps. Stamp for catalog.

The Northern Map Co.
Dept. RT Dunnellon, FL 32630.

A WORLD'S FAIR is being planned in New Orleans, and the state has just had a rail study completed which recommends 6-8 passenger trains daily between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, but none between Baton Rouge and Shreveport.....

WEEKEND IN MARCH (continued from page 11)

sodas, beer, paper plates, napkins, and glasses. More were supplied from train 169 of the 20th (the COLONIAL). On the latter train, a crewman deeply cut an index finger in the latch of the vestibule door of Amfleet car 21096, but was willing to defer medical attention until being relieved at Washington.

U.S. Customs and Immigrations rejected a passenger on the MONTREALER, train 61 of the 20th at St. Albans, and (s)he was returned to Montreal by bus and taxi.

A passenger on the SAN JOAQUIN, train 711, was taken off at Riverbank after he allegedly threatened to blow up the train. The train was searched, but nothing unusual found. The passenger was carrying a black box, and he was searched in Riverbank by FBI and other officials, and was found to have knives and surgical instruments taped to his body. He was later released, and he then called the Amtrak reservations office demanding free transportation Oakland to Seattle on Mar 23. Amtrak denied his request and sent warning notes about him to various stations.

Standees today numbered 15 on train 33 of the 20th, the SHENANDOAH, at Cumberland.

Family Days were in progress at Seattle, and 6 special roundtrip trains ran there for demonstration excursions.

The BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, train 192, was delayed 23mins at Philadelphia when engine 962 was sent to the shops and 964 substituted.

On train 172, the YANKEE CLIPPER, Amfleet car 20677 had no heat and a flooded restroom. First class service was cancelled and 21 passengers downgraded to coach.

INTER-AMERICAN delays: train 21 was 21mins late at Poplar Bluff, but no delays were reported by the ICG or MP. Train 22 was 76mins late at Little Rock due to a number of relatively minor delays: signal failure, freight train interference, meet with no. 21, etc. Train 24 was 15mins late at Temple, due to track work and unreported reasons. Train 23 of the 20th was 115mins late at Houston due to a loss of 140mins at Temple for the connection with no. 21.

Other delays: train 49, the LAKE SHORE LIMITED, had air hoses part between engine 296 and first car 1616 west of Albany, delaying it 22mins.

March 22

There was a total of 1271 standees on Amtrak trains today, distributed as follows: 50 on #407 arriving New Haven; 200 on #19, the CRESCENT, leaving N.Y.; 85 on #169, the COLONIAL, leaving Philadelphia; 300 on #173, the MERCHANTS LIMITED, leaving Newark; 175 on #187, the CONGRESSIONAL, arriving Philadelphia; 85 on #391, the SHAWNEE, leaving Rantoul IL; 20 on #178, the SENATOR, leaving Philadelphia; 10 on #182, the CONGRESSIONAL, 75 on #304, the ANN RUTLEDGE, leaving Springfield IL; 50 on #142, the BANKERS, leaving Phila.; 50 each on #117, the YANKEE CLIPPER, & 60, the MONTREALER, both leaving Phila.; 72 on #381, the ILLINI, leaving Chicago; 49 on #175, the MINUTE MAN, arriving Phila. (continued next issue)

CARS & CONSISTS

*Southern Railway Kentucky Derby special, ar Alexandria VA May 3 (9:40pm): (all SR) engines 6147, 6138, 6143, 6141 (FP7s); cars 2302 "Royal Arch" 11-bdrm slpr, business cars 8, 7, 15 "Alabama", 1A "Carolina", 1 "Virginia", 16 "Tennessee", 18 "Georgia", 5, 4, 3, 2, 19.

*20th Century RR Club Tulip Train, Holland MI May 16: (all Atk) engines 267, 340; cars 1213, 21156, 21203, 21214, 20029, 20038, 21232, 21206, 21226, 20235, 21009, 21197, 21114.

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4, Kansas City May 22: engines 234 (F40), 633 (SDP), 900 (AEM-7, deadhead, on at La Junta); cars 1352, 1246, Hi-level 39927, Superliners 31016, 34021, Hi-level 39971, Superliners 38030, 32048, 32061.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"The Governor is urging the key people in Congress to save Amtrak, and we are doing the same by taking this whistlestop tour. What is needed to add to these signs of support for Amtrak are the messages of the thousands of train riders--the actual passengers and the prospective riders--who want to see our trains keep on rolling. And the message is: 'Save our California trains.' Those four important words, sent by telegram to our Representatives in Washington, will be a clear message that can be heard this week as they deliberate over the future of Federal support for Amtrak."

--Caltrans Director Adriana Gianturco in whistlestop tour of California Amtrak lines, May 5 and 6.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"If the system were shutdown outside the Northeast, California would be hard hit, losing service on the Coast Starlight, from Los Angeles to Seattle, the California Zephyr, from San Francisco to Chicago, and the San Diego-Los Angeles line."

--United Press release in San Francisco Chronicle, Mar 24.

(Didn't know that one was still running.)

RAIL FANTRIPS

Jun 27: Private car Lehigh Valley 353 NYC-Albany RT on rear of ADIRONDACK and MAPLE LEAF. Limit 20 psgrs. $100 incl meals prepared aboard. 1916 car was VIP car on MAPLE LEAF inaug. David Ross, 300 Winston Dr #2020 Cliffside Pk NJ 07010

Jul 25: Excursions in conjunction w/ Worcester Science Center Transport. Day, 27-mi frt-only B&M Worcester Route (Worcester-Ayer MA) & ex-NYC B&A route. Mass. Bay RR Enthusiasts Inc., Box 136, Ward Hill MA 01831.

Jul 26: 50th Anniv Reading RR electrification; train of green MU cars over original 1931-2 lines to W. Trenton, Hatboro, Doylestown, Chestnut Hill & Norristown. SSAE to Phila. Chap., NRHS, Box 7302, Phila. PA 19101. 215-947-5769 evenings 7-9.

Jul, last 3 Mons & Weds: train to dinner at San Juan Capistrano depot. Use SAN DIEGANS 582 & 583. Sumptuous buffet dinner. $29 from L.A., $25 from Fullerton. Pacific RR Society Inc, PO Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. 714-684-7458 afternoons

Aug 8-30: China--The Peoples Train 2. Railfan tour of China. Fly from Seattle to Hong Kong. $2875; $500 deposit. Philadelphia NRHS Internat'l Tours, c/o Glen Roc Travel, 194 Scotch Road, Trenton NJ 08628.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to:
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

The "Chessie Safety Express" upcoming trips: May 30 Detroit-Clio MI, RT; May 31 Detroit-Grand Ledge MI, RT; Jun 6 Detroit-Grand Rapids MI, OW; Jun 7 Grand Rapids-St. Joseph MI, RT; Jun 13 Grand Rapids-Plymouth MI, RT; Jun 14 Grand Rapids-Chicago, OW; Jun 20 Chicago-Garrett IN, RT; Jun 21 Chicago-Hartford MI, RT.

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RAILROAD PICTURE POSTCARDS, 570 different views of 178 railroads in 16 countries on 5 continents. S.S.A.E. for complete listing and sample card to: Mary Jayne's Railroad Specialties, Inc., Route 5, Box 132-A, Covington, Virginia 24426.

YOU'RE INVITED--MEXICO RAILFAN SPECIAL TRAIN--Aug 31-Sept 14--5313 kilometers on three railroads--Mexico City including passenger and freight yards plus Sahagun car factory, Metro and street cars, Copper Canyon rail trip, locomotive ride. Trip assembles in San Antonio (join anywhere--ride Amtrak en route). For full details, write or call Howard B. Thornton, Director, Midwest Travel Service, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City, Oklahoma, 73110--Telephone 405-732-0566.

CITIZENS FOR RAIL CALIFORNIA is pleased to present "Toward a Rail California", the newly-released CRC position paper on California rail service. 18 pages, $3.50 postpaid. Also available is CRC's "San Joaquin Valley Rail Service Issue Analysis." 3 pages, 50¢ postpaid. Both are free with CRC membership: Regular $15.00 per year; Students, Seniors $7.50. Bi-monthly newsletter, chapter meetings, political action. Join today and help defeat the Stockman rail cutback plan.
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